THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (d) A production sharing contract for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons in Mahanadi offshore block MN-OS-I was signed on 18.4.1988 between Government of India and Oil India Ltd. and Chevron International Ltd. & Texaco Exploration India Inc. The salient features of the contract are ;

1. Foreign oil company will explore for Petroleum at its own risk and cost.

2. If there is a commercial discovery, OIL will have the option to participate forty per cent in development and production of the discovery.

3. If OIL decides to participate it will contribute forty per cent of development and production costs and remaining sixty per cent will be borne by the foreign oil company.

4. OIL will be entitled to the share of petroleum produced corresponding to its participation.

5. The foreign oil company's share of oil will be available to the Government at international market price till India reaches self-sufficiency.

6. After recovery of costs, the contractor willshare petroleum with the Government on sliding scale basis. Government's share of petroleumwill increase as the project economics improves.

7. The contractor will pay tax at the rate of fifty per cent on its profits.

8. OIL will not contribute to exploration costs but it will be associated with the foreign company's work right from the beginning.

9. The entire data acquired by the foreign company will be available to OIL.

10. The assets acquired for permanent use in petroleum operations would become OIL's property once the cost revovery for such assets is claimed by the foreign oil company without any further payment by OIL.

The foreign oil company has already started implementation of the contract. More than 475 kms. of seismic data has been acquired by the foreign oil company in June, 1988.

The foreign oil company will explore for oil/gas at its own risk and cost. OIL will not make any contribution until a commercial discovery of petroleum is made and OIL exercise the option to participate in the development and production of such discovery.

Constitution of Telephone advisory committees

4521. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to revive the old practice

of constituting Telephone Advisory Committees on district/local basis;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether State Telephone Advisory Boards exist and if so, what are their powers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BIR BAHADUR SINGH): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. One Telecom. Advisory Committee for each Secondary Switching Area under the Charge of Telecom. District Engineer will also be formed in addition to the State Telecom./Telephone District Advisory Committees. About 100 such committees have already been formed.

The functions of State Telecom/ Telephone Advisory committees are:-

(i) Monitoring the performance of telecommunication services and advising the Department for their improvement;

(ii) Bringing the telephone using public and the Department of Telecommunications into closer relationship;

(iii) Giving the public confidence that their grievances are being properly represented as well as attended to;

(iv) Giving publicity to the action being taken by the Department for improving and developing the telephone services;

(v) Assisting the Department in handling the shortages in telephone equipment and lines by invoking cooperation and patience from public; and

(vi) Assisting the Department in deciding out-of-turn connections as provided in the rules on a fair and equitable basis by joint assessment of the comparative merits of various applicants in the waiting list under the 'OYT' and 'NON-OYT' Special categories.

They can recommend for every bulk clearance in an exchange upto 5% of the total number of telephones being released, subject to a maximum of 100 telephones, for provision on out-of-turn priority basis from 'OYT-GENERAL' and 'NON-OYT Special' categories.

Rural Postal Services

4522. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 3261 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 22nd August, 1988 and state:

(a) the number of rural post offices which have their own buildings and accommodation for staff;

(b) whether Government have received complaint about the poor and irregular performance of many